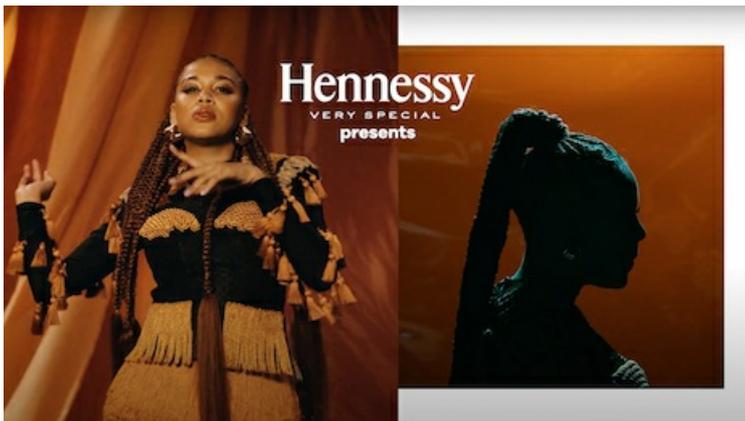


FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Hennessy aligns brand values, artists' voices in dynamic digital series

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The digital series offers bold vision and mission statements, opting to explore themes of originality and identity through the lens of young African creatives. Image credit: Hennessy

By AMIRAH KEATON

LVMH-owned Cognac brand Hennessy is in conversation with a mogul, artist and designer duo, all of whom open up on their respective pursuits in three newly-released digital drops.

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Each individual shares their story, alongside deeply-personal aspirations and insights as part of an aptly-titled overarching campaign effort, "Never Stop. Never Settle." The series spotlight young African creatives, opting to explore themes of originality, identity and more, through talented global lenses.

'Very Special' Spotlight

One of the world's most popular Cognacs, Hennessy's Very Special storytelling exercise presents a few up-and-coming power players

Each of the branded video's titles takes the form of a short quote, indicative of the values its speakers espouse within.

"I'm a dynamic individual, and I want to make very bold statements" titles Hennessy's most recent posting, the statement belonging to South African musician Shoma Josie.

"There's something innate in us as human beings that recognizes rhythm," she starts.

The most recent release of the trio, South African musician Shoma Josie stars in Hennessy's campaign

In a stunning creative treatment, her words are visually juxtaposed by a frame of what appear to be interpretive dancers. The talents complement Ms. Josie's accounts as a performance artist.

She describes the limitations that have previously come with being an African performer, detailing her excitement for a shifting status quo.

"I think for so long we've believed that the best you could be was an African Superstar," Ms. Josie says.

"Now, [you are going to] have to really look eye to eye [with African artists] and look at who has got the vibe, who has got the talent, there is no more this thing of I am just limited now to an African context," she explains. "That is what you see when you go out there like actually no one is better than you."

"This is our world as well."

"It became bigger than ourselves" fronts another clip, one that outlines the background of a designer duo.

From the jump, designer Velma Rossa expresses a desire not to be boxed in.

Herself and creator Oliver Asike are the Kenyan fashion creators behind "2ManySiblings," a platform for creative entrepreneurs like the pair, one that prioritizes the documentation of their community in a manner that only natives can.

Velma Rossa and Oliver Asike are the Kenyan fashion creators behind the creative platform, "2ManySiblings"

"We noticed that now people are very ready to defend things that have not been credited [for] a long time to Africans, like the makers of satin textiles, dance, even hairstyles," Ms. Rossa shares.

Onlookers of Hennessey's excerpt are able to get a glimpse of the founders' creative process, against the soundtrack of their own stories.

"All we need is one thread to weave our story," the designers exclaim in unison, ending the clip.

Brand alignment

Per its latest digital drop, Hennessy subtly places shared brand values on the table for viewers to dissect and, by way of interview-style conversations, the campaign aligns the brand early on with African artistry, a force quickly growing in scale, as far as global influence is concerned.

Unique in structure, "Never Stop. Never Settle." campaign assets hold the gloss of high-value advertising production while managing to maintain the authenticity of an intimate reflection.

Hennessy's campaign aligns the brand with global artistry and authenticity

The brand has delivered quite a few special campaigns in recent weeks, further associating its image with innovative entities and cultural narratives.

The LVMH-owned Cognac brand's Paradis extension teamed up with Chinese artist Yan Pei-Ming on a limited-edition Lunar New Year release 888 handcrafted limited-edition luxury decanters, each priced at 8,800 euros, or \$9,290 at current exchange. The number is considered China's luckiest and is closely associated with wealth by many across the region ([see story](#)).

Last June, Hennessy U.S. continued in the pursuit of promoting Black excellence through a series of spots dedicated to Maurice Ashley, the world's first Black chess grandmaster.

Its "Never Stop. Never Settle" mantra is on display via a group of short advertisements depicting young men engaging in different chess games and, similar to the aforementioned talents hailing from across the African continent, learning new life lessons along the way ([see story](#)).